

11/1/04

To whom it may concern:

I am a resident in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. I have a major issue with voice tracking. The more control over a radio market by a single operator, the less localism there seems to be. Multiple-radio station ownership has decreased localism in ways such as, residents not being able to feel the closeness to radio personalities because of the personalities broadcasting from another location.

When radio shows are pre-recorded especially in different areas across the nation, The audience loses valuable information such as the weather. If a show is a pre-recorded, it leaves specifics about how cloudy it is outside, or about the severe thunderstorms that could be moving in the area. Voice tracking could also leave out valuable information about traffic problems in the area. Future warnings about accidents that could be traffic-stalling and what detours to take are essential information that can help a motorist on their journeys.

According to the Trusteeship Model, government rules need to ensure broadcasters serve the PUBLIC interest, not just their own ECONOMIC interest. I understand that by centralizing talent and creating name recognition enables radio stations both to decrease costs and increase ratings and revenue. But, even according to the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA), “when a media company uses voice-tracking as a strategy to eliminate live broadcasts and local employees altogether, the connection to the local community can be hurt.”

I'm aware that the Commission does not have rules that directly address voice tracking, but regulations are strongly needed. Although audiences have increased initially, that number will start to decrease, and listeners would sooner or later start tuning into more local stations or stations that seemed to be more localized. My only fear is that we may not have the option in the future, if consolidation increases.

It would really satisfy the public and me if the Commission could take matters into their hands, go back and review their supportive positions on consolidation, find out how it affects the public and be more consistent with the Communications Act of 1934, which defines that the airwaves do belong to the public.

Thanks for your time.

Sincerely,

Naomi Rhodes